

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA), Ranking Member on the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, responded to action taken this week by the US Attorney in Philadelphia against Medco Health Solutions, Inc.

The following is Rep. Stark's statement:

"Medco is facing numerous charges of deceitful and illegal conduct that, if proved true, are inexcusable and will have denied many Federal employees the health care they deserve. Yet, this doesn't trouble House Republicans. They've developed a Medicare prescription drug bill that will only work if companies like Medco are willing to step in and run the show."

"My advice to the US Attorney Patrick Meehan, who has filed this 'Notice of Intervention' in two pending whistleblower actions against Medco, is that he be prepared to file many more cases just like it if House Republicans enact their Medicare bill.

"As Congress ponders the future of Medicare, I hope my colleagues will consider just what benefit seniors will get from the creation of a bewildering, new bureaucracy that relies solely on the private sector -- with little government oversight -- to assure seniors and people with disabilities get the medications they need. This FEHBP case is without the private sector being at nearly the financial risk House Republicans envision. Cases like this against Medco don't give me much hope."

On Monday, US Attorney Patrick Meehan filed a "Notice of Intervention" in two pending whistleblower actions charging the corporation with violating the federal False Claims Act and similar state laws. These charges stem from allegations that Medco defrauded taxpayers, the Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan, and its beneficiaries by filing false claims and engaging in shady book keeping while on contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield to provide mail order prescription drugs to plan members.